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595 to-day it is the more usual type, although most of the adult, middle-aged men of Lesu had had two wives, and later, because of white influence, gave up one. There are, however, still about six households in the village where the marriage is polygamous.

837 While white contact may have influenced the form of marriage, it has had relatively very little influence on extra-marital intercourse. This continues much the same as it did in the past. Each man has his *affaires de cœur* outside of marriage, and his wife has hers at the same time. This is a social custom with all the force of tradition.

586 Divorce is also an important element in the marriage structure. It occurs fairly frequently, and either party may secure it. The marriage payment is always returned to the husband, and the children go with the mother, no matter who initiates the divorce. The reasons for a divorce, its frequency, and the social attitude toward it, will be examined in another section of the chapter. At this point we are interested only in the general configuration.

595 It is into this social structure of formerly polygamous marriages, which within the last few years have become in general monogamous (but with a certain number of polygamous unions still in existence), occasional polyandrous marriages, occasional divorce and much extra-marital intercourse on both sides, that the sexual life of these men and women is set.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS LOVE

832 To know what is meant in Lesu by falling in love, it is necessary to understand what the individual considers attractive in the opposite sex, how the man woos his mate, how she responds, and what are the details of their life together. These are to a large degree socially determined, i.e. there is a general unanimity on what is considered a beautiful woman, and there is a more or less standardized

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DIVORCE

586 The kind of quarrels just described do not as a rule lead to divorce, which, however, does occur occasionally, usually because one mate neglects his responsibilities, or one of them forms a real attachment for someone else and ceases to care for the first mate. The economic motive, neglect of duties, is the more usual cause. A man will divorce his wife if she does not prepare his food for him as she should, or if she eats it before he returns home, or if she does not feed the pigs, neglects her garden work or any of the other tasks for which she is responsible. A woman divorces her husband if he is lazy, if he refuses to clear the bush ground for a garden, does not give her fish, fails to bring wood for the fires, and so on. Quite simply, then, divorce is usually caused by one mate or the other not sharing in the responsibilities for carrying on the household. Once divorced for this reason, a man or woman will have difficulty in getting another mate. They will be marked as lazy, and, although they may have lovers or mistresses, it will be very difficult for them to re-marry.

A change in emotional attitude, fickleness, or attachment to someone else, are also causes—although more infrequent ones—for divorce. There are always a few constitutionally fickle people, and particularly is this true to-day, when polygamy and polyandry are rather frowned upon and monogamy the more usual course. A woman may form a permanent attachment with her lover, and the husband, who may be tired of her anyway, will then divorce her.

Regardless of whether the husband or wife initiates the divorce, the marriage payment is returned to the husband by the wife's clan relatives, who received it at the time of marriage. The children always go with their mother, although exceptions have been known when a boy of ten or twelve years stayed with his father.

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Only two divorces occurred in Lesu while I was there, and even then there were certain modern and introduced factors which at least provided a setting for the conditions leading to the divorce. Uren was the husband of Kuin, and worked on a plantation about fifteen miles from Lesu. At first Kuin, who is from Lesu, lived with him on the plantation, but after a while he sent her back to Lesu to live with her mother. He said that he had to be gone frequently on errands for his "master," and then his wife was always having intercourse with all the plantation boys, and he did not like her promiscuity. Also, this was not done according to native custom, and gifts of *tsera* were not made by the lovers to the husband.

At Lesu there also lived Pakul and his wife Nakou. Pakul has a sensuous mouth and a reputation for being very licentious. He has been married many times, and never sticks to any wife very long. When he marries everyone says that he "marries fooling or lying," for all know that soon another woman will catch his fancy. Kuin and Pakul have been having intercourse for some time, both stealing out of their homes at night and going into the bush. News of it gets about and travels to the husband who is away on the plantation. He comes to Lesu, beats his wife, then has a talk with Pakul, telling the latter that he can keep Kuin and make a payment to him for her. Ongas, who is a clan relative of Kuin, and also the Luluai, is called in and tells Kuin and Pakul they must each pay Uren five *tsera*, setting a day in the near future for the settlement of the matter. In the meantime the divorce is arranged between Pakul and his wife Nakou, whose clan relatives return the *tsera* and loin-cloths which he paid for her. These were sent to Ongas, who is acting as an intermediary.

In the late afternoon of the day Ongas had set for the final settlement, the whole village assembled in his compound and outside of it. Ongas acts as a chairman. First

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586 he asks Uren if he is willing to let Kuin go and to receive *tsera* in payment. Uren replies "Yes," and says he is through with Kuin, for she is always having intercourse with someone or other. Ongas now turns to Kuin and asks her if she wants to leave Uren. She replies that she does not want to look at him any more, for since Pakul has made magic for her she can look only at him. Now Ongas speaks to Pakul and asks him if he wants to marry Kuin. To this he answers "Yes." Ongas then asks him and Kuin for the *tsera*. Pakul produces five *tsera*, but Kuin is silent and embarrassed, and produces none. Then someone explains that she has no *tsera*, and that her clan relatives, to whom she had gone for assistance, refused to help her out. Ongas overcomes this dilemma by telling Pakul that he must pay for her. Pakul goes to his house, which is close by, and comes back in a few moments with six *tsera*, which Ongas hands over to Uren. The latter is then asked by Ongas if he is satisfied with the payment. Uren replies "No," that he wants more. Ongas now brings out the payments returned by Nakou's relatives, which were supposed to be given to Pakul, and says that contrary to the usual custom he is going to give half this payment to Uren and half to Pakul. This he proceeds to do. Again Ongas asks Uren if he is satisfied, and this time the latter replies "Yes." Then Ongas asks the same question of Pakul, who also replies "Yes," adding that he now has the woman, Uren the *tsera*, and all is well. Nakou, his recently divorced wife, is not present. These proceedings have taken about four hours. After it is all over Ongas sagely remarks that before the year is over Pakul will have another wife.[1]

[1] The above "court" is somewhat of an innovation and was held to settle the matter quietly and keep it from the attention of the white Government and its administrative officers. Pakul should have given *tsera* to Uren all along for the privilege of his relationship with Kuin, but it is not expected that the average white official would realize this. The divorce would then have been effected by simply returning the

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Divorce is not exactly common. The two just described were the only ones taking place over an interval of ten and a half months among 232 people.

There are the usual exceptions, and Lumaeris was one of these. He is a middle-aged man who has had ten wives at different times, and here is his tale. When he was a youth of about fifteen he went to the neighbouring island of Tabar, where he lived with a classificatory brother. There he married Malanga, a Tabar girl, and had one child, a boy. Not very long after the birth of the boy, Lumaeris decided he wanted to return to Lesu, but his wife did not want to come. They were divorced, and she remained in Tabar and married another man.

Lumaeris returned to Lesu and there married Petterin, by whom he had two children. A bit later Lumaeris went away to work on a distant plantation. Petterin divorced him and remarried. At the plantation Lumaeris married again, this time a girl named Mamamlis, and there was one child from this marriage. When his time on the plantation was finished Lumaeris returned alone to Lesu. His third wife and child returned to the wife's village and she remarried.

This time when Lumaeris returned to Lesu he married Bombo, and, while still married to her, took a second wife, Lameth. Both the women were young, and all three got on quite well together. However, Lameth died, and Bombo left her husband to go away and work on the mainland of New Guinea for a white man.

Lumaeris went again to Tabar and there married Keitow. After about a year Lumaeris wished to return to Lesu, but his wife refused to leave Tabar, so they were divorced.

Once again he was back in Lesu, and now he married Lepaei, from the village of Pasawa, but they both lived at

original marriage payment, and it would have all been settled *en famille*, as was the divorce of Nakou and Pakul.

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Lesu. They were likewise divorced because, according to his story, she did not like Lesu and wanted to return to her own place.

Lumaeris continued his matrimonial adventures, and now married Bebele from a village about twenty miles from Lesu. They lived together at Lesu for many years until she died. Then he married Murit, who comes from a bush village. She is still living and the two are still married, but she is old, with one eye gone, and unable to work. So recently (a few years ago) he took an additional wife, Kuti, who is both young and attractive. This is his matrimonial status at the present time. Of his ten wives, two died and two are still living with him. The remaining six either left him or refused to leave their own village or island when Lumaeris wanted to wander about. In most of his marriages Lumaeris was unwilling to follow the custom of matrilocal residence. Whether there were other reasons, physical or psychological, which might account for his seeming inability to hold a woman for any length of time I do not know.

SEX TABOOS

Up to now, in discussing sexual life, we have stressed what people do rather than what they are forbidden to do. A study of the prohibitions or taboos is likewise necessary to an understanding of people's actions. First there is the most important rule of exogamy. No Eagle man may marry or have relationship with a woman of his own moiety, and the same applies to men and women of the Hawk moiety. So to each man half the women of the society are forbidden, and to each woman half the men are forbidden. It is merely an extension of the brother-sister taboo applied to all members of the same moiety. Infringement of this taboo is the worse crime of the society, and the punishment is death. Usually the two people who break this taboo commit suicide,

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Another kinship pattern is that

183 upon the divorce of parents a child stays with its mother.
586 But even to this we find an exception, as when Maso married another man, her child, a little girl, stayed with her father and his second wife. So there are modifications even in the supposedly rigid kinship patterns.

183 In the realm of economics it is easy to see the same kind
423 of variations. For instance, although land is communally owned, I found one case where the rule was circumvented to suit the needs and desires of one individual, and a payment made for the temporary private ownership of a piece of land.[1]

183 An individual finds much expression in group-life, and following traditional patterns of behaviour, such as dancing
342 and wailing, but all individuals do not experience these religious emotions equally. Also, in other ways, the individual has ways of expression peculiar to himself. For instance, although all the houses of the village look alike, each with its bamboo walls, its thatched roof, and the beaten ground as a floor, yet closer observations reveal differences. A few houses have carving on the door; a few others have two rooms instead of the usual one; and others have been made particularly convenient with commodious shelves; and the owner becomes quite attached to his own house. When Pulong was ill and resting in another house, she was homesick for her own dwelling.[2]

183 We have seen how every man fishes, hunts pigs, builds
555 his house, and cleans the bush ground for his garden, and how every woman plants the garden and cooks; yet this seeming lack of specialization does not prevent Tukan from being more skilled than the other men at fishing and becoming known for this particular skill, nor Ongas from being able to build houses better than anyone else, and also famed for this skill, nor Pulong from becoming known for her ability to prepare taro in a special way, and Manumat

[2] See pp. 159–160.

[1] See pp. 253–255.

3:Chinnery G, E-5 (1929)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

601 ***Rok.*—Brother; sister (woman speaking).**
Matok.—Brother's wife; husband's brother.
Sagok.—Sister; brother (woman speaking).
Ramisik.—Wife's brother; sister's husband.
Suk or *Oitanu.*—Wife.
Suk.—Husband.
Enak.—Husband's mother; son's wife (woman speaking).
Egik.—Brother's wife (woman speaking); husband's sister.

582 In this pedigree one man is married to two sisters who are both living. The cross-cousin marriage is said to be definitely barred. A man is permitted to marry his mother's brother's widow, his brother's widow, his wife's sister, or the daughter of his mother's brother's daughter. In this village there are several instances of marriage between people of the same clan.

586 587 In almost every village on the East coast of New Ireland there are numerous men and women who have been divorced and re-married several times. The priests of the Roman Catholic Mission hold that the facility with which these divorces and re-marriages take place reacts on the issue rate of the community.

614 162 The clan distribution of the population between Kavieng and Karu is shown in the following tables of adults and children of both sexes. (Appendix 2.)

614 As I have already stated, each clan is divided into sub-groupings associated in some way with the ghosts of the dead. Every person, therefore, has his clan *evit-bung* or *pambang* (north of Fatmilak), *butamit* (south of Fatmilak), his totem, *mani*, and his sub-division, *masolei*, *masele* (north of Fatmilak), *morali* or *misili* (south of Fatmilak). The sub-divisions bear the names of pieces of land, caves, capes, mountains, rocks, prominent points on the sea-shore, reefs, rivers, waterfalls, or other natural phenomena, characteristic of the spot from which the sub-division is said to have originated, and in addition they bear the names of and are associated with mythical pigs, snakes, sharks, or other animals connected with the site that bears the group name. A large number of the *masolei* sites consist of fertile land, which is planted from time to time by the members of the *masolei* sub-division or by people of other sub-divisions permitted to do so. Quite a number [778] of the sub-division locations, however, are barren, and without value. Such places are regarded simply as sacred spots to which the members of the sub-divisions associated with them have rights against others.

Between Kavieng and Fatmilak there are many villages in which the clans have merely one or two sub-divisions apparently of little importance. In Kavieng itself I found the same sub-divisional name occurring in more than one clan. In places like Lakuramau and

4: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
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surreptitously. Divorce is moderately common and individuals may have a succession of mates.

During the period of pregnancy a women may have no sexual intercourse with her husband or anyone else. The man may, however, have sexual intercourse with a woman other than his wife. After the birth of the infant neither the mother nor her husband may have intercourse with each other, or with anyone else, during the period of lactation. For the women there is thus an abstention from sexual intercourse for a minimum of three years and for perhaps as much as four. This taboo, if kept, would cause a long interval of time between births. It is difficult to find out exactly how strictly it is kept. Like all taboos in primitive societies it is sometimes broken. But one cannot collect statistics on the subject because one only hears of the cases when the culprits are found out. After living in the society for almost a year, the writer is of the opinion that it is kept moderately strictly. There is a grave social stigma for those who break it and are found out, and their infant is supposed to become ill. One such case happened during the author's visit and was the cause of much gossip. It was known that the parents of a certain sickly infant had broken the taboo and the natives all pointed to their unhealthy infant as the result. It is more difficult to break this taboo and not be found out than it is for a member of our society to transgress our custom of monogamy and not be caught. In the primitive society under discussion there are several conditions which make secrecy difficult. First, the village is small, numbering only a couple of hundred, and everyone knows everyone else well. Secondly, practically all of the social life is carried on outdoors, and extra-marital intercourse generally takes place in the bush, which limits somewhat the privacy. Thirdly, these people, like all others, love to gossip and indulge in it to a great extent. It is therefore not easy to conceal a violation of this taboo. The social disgrace of being detected, and the belief that it will harm the child, are strong deterrents in a society motivated largely by social prestige.

There is no infanticide and, as far as I know, no physical means of abortion. There is, however, a leaf, or rather several leaves, chewed by the women and believed to cause sterility. There is another leaf which if chewed within two months after conception will make the embryo disappear, according to native belief. Specimens of both kinds

5: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1932 OM10 New Ireland OM10
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Around food also is focused much of the prestige of an individual in his family. Here a man's standing is largely dependent upon his ability as a food provider and the woman's upon her industry in preparing the food. Failure on the part of either partner to fulfill these obligations is sufficient cause for a divorce.

Social Organization

Before describing the feasts and showing the way in which much of life centers around food, it is necessary to give a very brief description of the essentials of the social organization. There are two exogamous moieties, the Eagle and the Hawk, which are subdivided into clans. Descent is matrilineal, the clan consisting of an extended family, all related through the female line. The next kinship unit in order of size is the individual family, which may be monogamous, is frequently polygamous, and occasionally polyandric.

On the basis of locality the largest unit is the village. In the district where I lived there are five villages forming one linguistic unit. This is not and never has been, as far as I could observe, a political unit. In the past, warfare was frequent between the villages and there neither was nor is one chief for all of them, each having its own. The village is subdivided into hamlets,—Lesu into fifteen. Residence is matrilocal and so a hamlet will usually have many female members of the same clan. The hamlet has from two to seven or eight houses, each one having its communal cooking ground and generally a cook house also, for use on rainy days. With the exception of the very small ones, a hamlet has its own cemetery and men's house.

The society is agricultural. Gardening, fishing, hunting wild pigs, and cooking are the main everyday occupations. Trading is important and carried on according to exact and traditional rules. The familiar Melanesian gift-exchange is also practiced.

Frequency of Feasts

After living in this society for only a short time, one is impressed by the great frequency of feasts. The following is a list of occasions on which they are held.

Occasion	Name
Pregnancy	ania asil tsegɣ (eating for infant)
Birth	Grimɣsi (name of dance performed by women at this rite)
Giving name to infant	Basisis (name)
Several months after birth if infant is strong	ania asil wɐtwɐt tsegɣ (eating for strong infant)